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CHINA AND JAPAN.

A CONTRAST.

BY THEODORE S. WOOLSEY, PROFESSOR OF INTERNATIONAL LAW
IN YALE UNIVERSITY.

The spectacle of Japan marching side by side with European powers and with the United States, to rescue their ministers and its own from Chinese violation of the sacred rights of embassy, is one of the most striking of which it is possible to conceive. Half a century ago these two powers, China and Japan, entered modern political society on the same footing.

So too, though in a more formal way, by the action of the states at the Congress of Paris in 1856, Turkey was received into the family of nations.

But no one of these three states was admitted to political fellowship on even terms with the other powers. Their sovereignty was recognized by the fact that treaties were made with them, but their inferior status was emphasized nevertheless by the conditions of those treaties.

Turkey has remained a ward of the powers ever since, playing them off skillfully against one another, yielding to pressure when they could unite, indulging now and then in adventures of her own, but gradually losing influence and territory.

The two others were less subject to European policies and jealousies. For a time they trod the same path. In both there was popular resistance to the new ideas, while those in authority investigated foreign methods with varying favor. Thus there was anti-foreign rioting in Japan, and the killing of an American Secretary of Legation, and the destruction of legation premises, acts which recall the events of the past summer in Peking. That was in 1861 and the two years succeeding. Today this same Japan stands for modern civilization while China stands for resistance to it.

To understand and explain this startling difference between the two peoples, one must study the temperament and mental characteristics of the two and their historical development.

This is not easy for the foreigner to do: it is not the object of the present sketch. These few pages merely attempt to place side by side the diplomatic relations of these two peoples with our own country, particularly as they have found expression in treaty form, with the hope that thus can be more easily traced those diverging paths which have led to ideas so widely removed.

In examining our relations with China which were established by the treaties of 1844 and 1858, we note that two striking features differentiate them from our ordinary commercial arrangements.

First, a fixed tariff was made part of the treaty, to be altered only with the consent of the United States. This means that China surrendered that portion of internal sovereignty which relates to the raising of revenue by a tax on imports and exports at pleasure. It is as if, before putting the Dingley tariff into effect, the United States had been compelled to secure the assent of foreign powers to it, and with every prospect of their refusal.

Second, American citizens, wherever admitted into China, and American ships in the treaty-opened ports, were declared exempt from local jurisdiction. A parallel case would be the trial of a German subject committing crime in New Haven by his own consul administering his native law; or the exemption from local law of the North German Lloyd Company in New York harbor.

As a sort of counterpart to these most serious limitations upon Chinese sovereignty, only certain ports were opened to the United States, and the right of embassy at the capital was confined to special business visits, residence not being permitted. A concession in the later treaty permitted foreigners to teach, and natives to profess, Christianity.

The early treaties with Japan, of 1854, 1857 and 1858, were marked by just the same characteristics. There were two ports opened to American trade, with others gradually added. There was a tariff which Japan could not alter without consent. And there was the ex-territorial privilege which handed over to United States officials for trial all of their countrymen who were charged with unlawful conduct. The Japanese treaty of 1858 also established religious liberty.

The relations of the two countries to modern civilization were thus very similar, for the United States treaties were a sample of others.

That this contract should breed hostility to the new ideas and their representatives was inevitable. Willingness to change is a mark of the hopefulness of youth; conservatism is the sure result of age; and both these nations had a past history of great antiquity, full of honorable achievement.

Before this in China there had been trouble. The "Opium War," exhibiting British valor to better advantage than British justice, had resulted in large indemnities. The Taiping rebellion, though not chargeable to the new influences, had been originated by a man under missionary instruction who renounced Confucianism. Before its close the accumulation of damages to property, insults, murders of missionaries, and treaty infractions, led to the abortive Tien-Tsin treaty, and subsequently the capture of the Taku forts by France and England. Claims of the United States against China of that period were settled by the payment of a large indemnity, a good share of which was afterwards returned.

The early relations between Japan and the European powers were not marked by the same violence. Nevertheless, there was strenuous opposition to the tendency of the government to open itself to foreign influence. There were rage and riots aimed at foreign residents. The attack on the legations in Tokio has been already alluded to. And in 1863, in the disturbed condition attending the overthrow of the Shogunate, the closing of the Straits of Shimonoseki to foreign trade led to armed intervention by Great Britain, France, the United States and The Netherlands, followed by the inevitable indemnity. Here again the United States, to its credit, made return of its share of the money.

There now came a period in the history of both these states, broadly speaking 1860-1880, when foreign influence became more active and the native mind was forced to decide what his country's attitude in view of it should be. Here we see a radical divergence between the policies of the two. In Japan the governing class, some of whose representatives had before this made themselves familiar, by travel, with European and American institutions, grasped the fundamental idea that in the new civilization lay the secret of power, military, naval and political. Their young men began to resort to foreign schools, to study military organization and the art of war, naval construction, modern industries and foreign systems of law. Foreign instructors were imported at the same time, so that education, the army, the navy, the system of law, and the development of industries, were gradually revolutionized.

China meanwhile was moving in the same direction, though far more slowly. The power of the viceroys in the provinces detracted from the influence and centralization of the imperial government at Peking, and the country was less open, geographically speaking, to contact with the new ideas. Moreover, there seems to be an invincible conservatism in the Chinese character which has prevented such development in the methods of transportation as would tie the provinces more closely together. We see, however, a considerable extension of trade, a desire for better relations with foreign powers as shown by the Buckingham embassy, and lastly in certain limited regions a large emigration of the laboring class to the islands of the Pacific and to our own continent, north and south. But there was no such eager plunge into new ways on the part of the influential as in the island kingdom.

Thus Japan was invaded by the new civilization, while China invaded it.

The next set of treaties between the United States and these two countries begins to mark this difference.

In the treaty of 1868 with China, trade, consular representation, religious freedom, and emigration were *reciprocally* arranged for, whereas before the provisions respecting these matters were unilateral, marked by exclusiveness on the part of China, distrust on our own part.

The treaty of 1866 with Japan readjusted the tariff, enlarged trade facilities, and promised lights, buoys, and beacons for safer navigation.

Another decade passed and the difference in the development of the two became more marked.

In Japan feudalism was abolished in 1871. Through local assemblies the people were trained in representative government, and in 1881 a royal decree announced a parliament to begin legislative work some years later. This was established in 1890. It has not always worked smoothly. Occasional anti-foreign movements have sprung up. But the empire has held to the line of development begun upon, has grown strong, has fulfilled its international obligations, and has stood ready to exact the performance of their engagements by other powers.

The ruling class in China was not of the same calibre. With less sense of honor and spirit of self-sacrifice and loyalty, it has neither been able in all cases to perform its international duties nor to insist upon its rights. This is well illustrated by

the history of the emigration question in the United States, which was the subject of the next treaty which we notice, in 1880.

The influx of these patient but astute work-people had begun to alarm those with whom they came in competition, and in 1880 restriction upon immigration was allowed, although its prohibition was expressly forbidden.

The Convention of 1878 with Japan, on the contrary, enlarged the freedom of trade, abolished export duties, increased the number of free ports, and conceded the right of the Japanese government to regulate its own tariff and commerce. Yet still, under the most favored nation proviso, our goods paid only the low duty which was applicable to other powers.

By this time Japan, conscious of its growing strength and improved position amongst nations, and chafing under its international servitudes, ex-territoriality, and a tariff not under its control, was struggling for emancipation from them.

The former was based upon the theory that native law and its administration failed to guaranty just treatment to foreigners and their property. To disprove this the Japanese called attention to their recent code of laws framed after European models, and to a trained judiciary. But the latter, a compulsory low tariff on imports, was too beneficial to foreign trade to be lightly surrendered, so that Japan was forced to wait until events established her right to an untrammelled international position.

Between 1880 and the next treaty with China in 1894, several Acts of Congress were passed which greatly limited Chinese immigration and regulated in the most drastic way the rights of the Chinese already here. Some of this was in violation of treaty until the Convention of 1894 sanctioned it. Nevertheless, in 1897 missionary privileges in China were enlarged, and in 1898 Chinese immigration into Hawaii was forbidden.

This want of reciprocity sufficiently marks the inequality of status of the two contracting parties, while the rise of Japan to equality with ourselves is shown by the Extradition Treaty of 1886, which follows our usual form.

Recall now the events of the last few years.

When the war with China broke out, Japan realized that she was, so to speak, on trial. She took pains to ensure conformity with the rules of modern warfare in her handling of neutral interests as well as in the operations against China. She took so unusual a step, for instance, as the detailing of a

professor of international law to accompany and advise the flag officer of her fleet. In one battle only, the capture of Port Arthur, under special provocation, was she charged with violation of the best usages. On the other hand, the Chinese were ridiculously weak on law, and constantly violated the rules of civilized warfare.

The speedy collapse of China surprised and alarmed Europe, and three powers curbed the Japanese when they tried to reap the full fruits of their victory. But the indirect results of the war were great and gratifying, for Japan was able to so revise her treaties as to get rid of the tariff and ex-territorial restrictions under which she had chafed so long. So that the end of the century sees her a power of the first rank, without a flaw in her sovereignty, sharing with others the duty of policing the Orient, and setting to others an example of rigid discipline, conformity to law and military efficiency. And her education in modern ways is so complete that she inclines to dismiss her teachers and with the watchword "Japan for the Japanese" march confidently on in her career.

China, on the contrary, has become the prey of the European powers. One after another has taken advantage of her weakness. Cessions and concessions have followed one another thick and fast, until by comparison the United States appears the most considerate of friends.

Into the present discords and their remedy it is not the object of this article to inquire. It is confined to a simple contrast of the tendencies of the two countries as their relations with our own exhibit them.

The difference of course lies in their different attitudes toward modern ideas. Exactly as they have known how to extract strength from them, so have they fared.

Power, military power, is still the principal test of international position. To secure fair treatment, a state must be able to command it. The equality of states means the equality of rights, not equality in getting those rights respected in the world's practical politics. Japan can perform her own obligations, and is ready to maintain her rights. She is therefore on an equality with others. China at present can do neither. Her status is therefore inferior to others. This difference is the necessary result of their different policies and ideas. If China would occupy a better position she must throw away her prejudices and copy Japan. In that case two questions must be asked.

Under whose auspices shall China be introduced to civilization? If persuaded thus to alter her policy, would not the industrial, perhaps the political, peace of the world be endangered? In the answer to these questions lies the key to the history of the coming century.